

Interview with Kiran: Maoism is our Identity, not a Tail

Mohan Vaidya Pokharel (Kiran), Naya Patrika Daily, October 21, 2008

You are considered as a hardliner in the Maoists' Party. Tell us briefly where and on what account you differ sharply with the party?

Kiran: I feel that conspiracies are on to foil the Maoists' established credentials. After I was released from the Indian prison, talks of artificial division in and among the hardliners and the liberals have cropped up. I think specifically the revolutionary ideology of the Maoists is being targeted deliberately. The trend has been that if one talks on ideological grounds he or she is labeled as a hardliner.

As far as differences are concerned, I do not have any objection to the party. And of myself who would always tell my mind without hesitation. However, the moot questions remain intact. There is the great danger that in the name of liberalism whether the party will lose its basic ideology? Are we forgetting our commitments? Whether our commitment to National Sovereignty is on the continuous wane? Is the party falling into the trap set by the Rightists? These are not my personal concerns, instead should be the concerns of the party as a whole?

Tell us something about the hullabaloo over changing the party's tag? There is a kind of competition among the Maoists and the UML in removing Mao's name from the party tag? What say you?

Kiran: As far as the UML is concerned, I personally feel that it is not even a Communist party. There are some leaders in the UML camp who believe in communist ideology but the party is not a communist party. Thus there should not be any debate even if it declares that it is no more a communist party. However, in our case changing the party tag is irrelevant and illogical.

Your Party Chairman has already said that the debate over abandoning the party tag is on in the party for over two years now? Is Mao's name a tail now?

Kiran: As is normal of a political party we too discuss and debate over several critical and crucial issues. Nevertheless, without making a formal decision over the contentious issue, nothing can be taken for granted. For us, Maoism is the party's identity—it is not at all a "tail" as it is being interpreted by some both within and without. It is the prime identity of the peoples' revolt. In the UML's case it is indeed a tail but not for the Maoists as such.

Unless a formal decision is taken by the party whosoever is advocating the case of dropping the tag are his/her personal considerations.

Regarding the Communist unity is concerned I do not rule out the possibility in the distant future but for the time being it is not possible.

What about the inner rift in your party as regards the Militia integration is concerned?

Kiran: It is also a critical issue but there is no difference as you have pointed out. We have charted out clear party lines over the issues of peace process, constitution drafting and the Militia integration. We need rather to devise modalities for the integration process—we need thorough discussion over this issue as well.

What about the emerging differences between you and party president?

Kiran: The political situation is such that it demands debates and discussions. That's all.

Where is the Maoists' party heading towards?

Kiran: Revolutionary spirit is still kicking and alive in the party paraphernalia. Nevertheless, we need to continuously rectify our mistakes as there is the concern among our supporters whether the party is deviating away from its prime ideological premises. The central leadership, unfortunately, has kept itself away from the people—which should not have been the case.

The party is undergoing a transition as the State too is. We are yet to totally dismantle past set-up and rebuild a new one.

Tell us about the debate on People's Republic and Democratic Republic?

Kiran: We are still mulling over the issue. It needs ample discussion as it is directly linked to drafting the new constitution. It is my belief that Democracy as such needs to be redefined in the Nepali context else drafting the constitution becomes redundant.

And it is only but normal that in such critical issues various opinions emerge and there also the collision.

Why is it that there are so much of differences in the Maoists' Camp?

Kiran: More than concentrating on making determined efforts we have exhibited flexibility. No compromise should be made on our ideology—this is what I believe.

The Maoists have come this far ahead after holding intense debates and discussions. The party will continue to serve the people in this way. *However such discussions and debates should not become public—that will invite anarchy.*

How do you evaluate the government performance?

Kiran: It will only become a premature evaluation. We want to move ahead, yet we do not have the needed absolute majority. Old mindset prevails in the bureaucracy. Nevertheless we are determined in our set objectives.

Political revolution vs. economic revolution—it is also being debated in the party?

Kiran: Political revolution is yet to conclude. It is still on. We are still within the framework of the democratic republic. Some of our friends have begun talking of the economic revolution. I don't think that unless political revolution comes to a positive end, economic revolution is possible.